

West Glamorgan Ramblers' Newsletter

Autumn 2010

Hello,

The start of the New Year gave us snow, forcing the cancellation of walks. We then had a flaming June that dried the normally wet boggy areas and made us wary of sunstroke! Now (July) the weather has changed again, (and is changeable), bringing us the wettest July for some time. I hope the weather for the winter programme will be kind to us.

Once again a huge thank you to the walk leaders, work party path clearers, committee members and volunteers who have given their time to make West Glamorgan Ramblers group function and to keep our rights of way open. We are always in need of more volunteers so why not consider coming out to clear a path, helping out with the administrative work of the committee or even leading your first walk. Some of our experienced walk leaders will be only too happy to help you plan a walk and will come out with you to walk it on the ground. Why not give it a go!

Committee news

Your committee meets once a month to discuss things that have arisen which affect our walking activities. These include such things as blocked paths, requests to divert or close paths, membership, programme etc. Every three months we send representatives to Cowbridge for the Glamorgan Area meeting. This is our chance to meet with other groups in our area and discuss recent events.

A number of our committee members will be stepping down this year. Our vice-chair, Dave Allen feels he can no longer continue following his recent illness. Thank you for all you have done for the group. Also retiring is Viv Davies. Kath Thomas left committee earlier in the year.

The nomination form has a list of committee members together with the current vacancies. We are always ready to welcome new members onto the committee and as some of our existing committee would like to step down this year, it would be good to see some new faces around the table. Why not come along and sit in on some of the meetings and see if it's for you. If you'd just like to take the minutes, that would be fine.

It's our 30th Birthday!

2011 sees West Glamorgan group reaching that milestone in life. It's a while since it was a teenager, been in denial through its 20s but now has to face up to 30 and heading for a mid-life crisis! So why not come along to the AGM and volunteer to help West Glamorgan Group reach 40, 50 and beyond! Have you any ideas how to celebrate our 30th birthday? Let us know what you would like to see. If anyone has old photos of walks over the last 30 years we would like to borrow them to scan and set up an archive.

AGM

The next Annual General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday 20th October 2010** in the Environment Centre, Pier Street, Swansea at **7.00 p.m.** Pier Street is located between Morgan's Hotel and the Evening Post Building. In previous years the meeting has been very poorly attended by a small percentage of our 300+ members. Do come along this time and hear how your society is run.

Glamorgan Area AGM

The Glamorgan Area AGM will take place in Mumbles at 2pm on 6th November 2010 in the Victoria Hall, 6 Dunns Lane, Mumbles, SA3 4EA. There will be a pre-AGM 4 mile walk starting at 10.30am from Oystermouth Square Car Park (near Boots the Chemist) which will visit Mumbles Head. Please come along and meet the rest of the Glamorgan area groups. Maybe we can arrange more joint walks?

Annual Christmas Dinner

This year's dinner will be held again in the King Arthur at Reynoldston. Numbers are limited so please book by 20th October to be sure of a place. Once more thank you to Viv Davies for organising it. John Ashley will lead a walk before the meal to help us work up an appetite.

Short/Medium walks for the programme

The short Saturday walks that Rambler leaders put on jointly with the Gower Society have proved popular. We also have some short Sunday ones as well. Not everyone wants to do long strenuous walks so we do need to provide a range of distances in order to be able to include all our members in a walk that meets their level of fitness. If there are any budding walk leaders who fancy putting together a short walk for the programme please contact John Ashley.

Stepping Stones

We will be continuing to offer very short walks (usually 1-3 miles) to encourage new members to take up walking and provide walks for some of our senior members who feel they can no longer come on the short/medium walks. Perhaps you have a relative who because of age or infirmity is unable to walk a great distance. Those who have come on a Stepping Stones walk come in the knowledge that the walk won't be too difficult.

Maybe some of our medium length leaders could volunteer to do a morning short walk for Stepping Stones and follow it with a medium afternoon walk in the same area for the more able section of our group. It only means adding an extra couple of miles to your recce!

Weekday/Evening/Themed walks

There are a number of ways we could add variety to the programme and make some walks more of a social event. Any volunteers please? Any suggestions? A few ideas are listed below:

Weekdays - Other groups lead walks on weekdays. Perhaps you have joined them on one. Could you lead a midweek walk? Let us know.

Weekday evening walks – Anyone prepared to lead summer short evening walks similar to the Thursday Gower Society Walks?

Pub lunches - In the early years of the group we used to stop for a pub lunch half way around. Anyone fancy leading a pub walk?

Rail walks – Always a popular event. We've done them before – Does anyone feel like running a few?

Night walks – We used to have fun walking in the early evening winter darkness then would end up in a pub for a social.

All Wales Coast Path - Nicholaston Bridge

The work party helped the council to erect the new bridge at Nicholaston Pill. This forms part of the route for the new coast path. The council acknowledged that without our help they would not have been able to undertake the project. The photographs of the building work can be found in the News section of the web site.

All Wales Coast Path: - Gower Event scheduled for Tuesday 28/09/10 at 9.00 a.m.

– Come and join the walk beforehand!

The All Wales Coast Path is still under development and will open fully in 2012. The Environment Minister (and Rambler), Jane Davidson, opened the first stretch in North Wales in July. Andrew and Zetta were on hand to celebrate the opening and to give an interview to ITV Wales. Photographs of the event can be seen in the News section of the web site. The second stretch to open was in Porthcawl.

On 28/09/10 at 9.00 a.m. (possibly subject to change) Jane Davidson will be at the youth centre in Llanmadoc to open the stretch from Port Eynon to Llanmadoc. Our work party has been busy in this area putting up signage and undertaking clearance. West Glamorgan Ramblers have been asked to put on a walk that takes the Coast Path Baton along part of the route. The baton has been carved from Welsh Oak and has the Dragon Shell Coast Path logo engraved into it. Hopefully the few remaining problems in the rest of Gower will be resolved soon and the entire Gower Coast Path can be opened.

John Ashley will be leading the baton walk to publicise the coast path. Details of the walk when finalised will be emailed to those on his list. If you intend to join the walk or would like further information please ring John on 01792-201171. We would like to know how many of you can make it so we can ensure a good turn-out for the event.

Ramblers Cymru

The Cardiff Office goes from strength to strength. Rob Hanna has been busy securing funds for various projects and this has culminated in the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Ramblers Cymru and The Countryside Council of Wales. This acknowledges that Ramblers Cymru is an important element of the Welsh countryside and will be consulted in events that affect walking in Wales. As part of this, I have just started a PhD research course to study the economic benefits of visitors/locals walking the new All Wales Coast Path.

James Norman has now left the organisation to work for KPMG. His skills, learned at Ramblers Cymru, have been recognised and he now has a full time job in customer relations.

Weekend away 2010

This year's weekend away was to the Lake District in May. Thank you to all the walk leaders and to Dave Bird who informed us this would be the last trip he would be arranging. We had very good weather and wonderful visibility. The dry conditions led to easy walking across dried up boggy uplands. Even when rain threatened it didn't last long. On the Sunday night, more snow fell and it was like winter again. Photographs of the walks are on the web.

Weekend away 2011

Next year's weekend (13/05/2011 to 16/05/2011) will be in the Exmoor/ Lynton area taking in coast and country. More details are available from Tim Gronow, Karen Gibbs or Mark Wolle. Please let them know if you intend joining the group for the weekend.

Footpaths

Have you noticed the planning applications in the Swansea Leader? Copies of the ones that affect Rights of Way are also sent to Lynne Lock. The majority of these diversions relate to errors on the map and the council is now redrawing the map so that the actual paths on the ground are shown correctly on the definitive map.

Reporting blocked/overgrown paths –tell us!

Have you been for a walk or recce and come across a blocked/overgrown path? If you have encountered a problem in the West Glamorgan area, please contact Lynne Lock. She will inform the local authority of the situation and ask them to take action. Where possible give the Grid Reference and maybe a copy of the OS map showing the position of the blockage. If the blocked path is further afield, the number for the footpath section of the local authority is usually on that council's web site. Remember, if you don't report it, it won't get cleared!!

Clearing blocked/overgrown paths – We have a work party!

Did you know we have a work party that clears paths? Thank you to John Mellor for co-ordinating the activity. Often Lynne will report an overgrown path and the council will go out with our work party to clear the obstruction. We always need new volunteers for the work party. Can you help? Give us a ring and let us know. If you feel you can't do much, don't worry, many hands make light work and together we can clear a path. The more volunteers we get, the more paths we can clear!

West Glamorgan Ramblers web site

There are now photos of over 60 walks on our web site and the number is growing every month. Go to www.westglamorganramblers.org.uk and click the galleries button. There are also news items and a copy of the programme of walks. Thank you to Alex Thomas for maintaining the site.

Work Party clearance of Path LL24 through Cilibion Plantation

During the winter our work party hacked their way through about a mile of totally overgrown path to reach the Cilibion Plantation which is a fine bluebell wood. Due to a local authority mistake in originally recording the end of this path, a judge ruled in 1985 that the right of way between Llethryd Cottage and the road at Llethryd Bridge (a matter of 100 yards or so) was to be taken off the definitive map. For the last 25 years visitors have complained to the council about the blockage. It has now come to light that about ten years ago there was a legal agreement signed between the council and The Forestry Commission which allows public access throughout the neighbouring plantation. The owner of Llethryd Cottage subsequently bought this plantation but the access agreement is still binding on any new owner. He has not however maintained the stiles that would allow passage onto Pengwern Common. (N.B. The track from the road to the cottage remains private property). This issue is yet to be resolved. Once we can cross onto Pengwern Common we can add new circular walks to our programme.

Walk Leaders' information

Hopefully most of our leaders will have been able to complete the walks template that has been sent out by the programme co-ordinators. If anyone is having problems using it let me know. Emailing the completed template with the details pre-formatted will save the co-ordinators a great deal of time in compiling the programme so thank you to all who have used it.

Your walk details will have been uploaded to the Walks Finder section of the national web site. Some leaders prefer that their contact details are not shown on the web. If you do not wish your telephone number to appear please ensure you always advise this to the programme officer when submitting a walk. I would be grateful if all walk leaders would check their on-line walk entry for accuracy and in particular check if the pointer on the map displays your correct start/meeting place. The Walks Finder has a 'detailed' search option to filter the West Glamorgan group walks and this can be found at: http://www.ramblers.org.uk/areas_groups/groupswalksfinder.htm

We would also be grateful if you could keep a note of how many people come out on your walks so that we can build up an idea of average numbers for walks. Please let Zetta know the figures.

Ramblers Christmas Dinner
King Arthur Hotel, Reynoldston
Sunday 28th December 2010

Organiser: Viv Davies

Meet: 02.00 p.m. for 02.30 p.m.

The Dinner has been arranged to take place after the local walk so that those Ramblers wanting to work up a proper appetite can do so - and still join the party! The meal will be open to friends and family but please ensure you book everyone in by **21st October 2010**.

Three courses Price: £13.95

The Menu Options are as follows:

Starters

- Roasted Red Pepper & Tomato Soup with Garlic and Basil Croutons
- Perl Las (welsh blue cheese) and Roasted Walnut Salad
- Smoked Haddock & Salmon Fishcakes with Homemade Tartare sauce
- Homemade Country Pate with spiced pear and apple chutney

Main

- Roast Turkey with Chestnut Stuffing, Chipolatas and Cranberry Sauce
- Roast Welsh Beef with Yorkshire Pudding
- Roasted Welsh Lamb Shank with Leek Mash and Port, rosemary and redcurrant sauce
- Salmon and Spinach Encroute with dill and mustard cream sauce
- Roasted Butternut Squash & Goat's Cheese Risotto

Dessert

- Traditional Christmas Pudding with Brandy Sauce
- Christmas Muffin with..... Ice cream
- Chocolate & Black Cherry Christmas Log
- Winter Berry Terrine with Mulled Wine Sorbet

Coffee and Mince Pies to finish

Payment to be made by **20th October 2010**.

Please send your choice of menu and cheque to:

Viv Davies

The cheque should be payable to:

"RAMBLERS SOCIAL FUND".

You can also pay in person at the AGM on 20th October 2010
at The Environment Centre, Pier Street.